

### **A3 Technology Analysis– Frank R. Walkup Library John Muir High School**

In terms of technology, the Frank R. Walkup Library and Research Center at John Muir High School is a library stopped in time. Recent budget issues over the last four years have resulted in a lack of funding have caused much-needed financial resources to be funneled away from the library and into the classrooms. This has effectively halted the library's forward progress in becoming a physical resource to support three district technology goals to "use technology to improve teaching and learning by supporting the district's curricular goals and academic content standards," to enable "students [to] acquire technological and information literacy skills needed to succeed in the classroom and the workplace" and to "ensure appropriate access for all students." After significant visible progress was made with the installation of a computer research lab and the district wide adoptions of online databases, limited library staffing has changed the focus of the teacher librarian's responsibilities to textbook distribution and Accelerated Reader implementation. The result of these changes is having a tremendous impact on collection development. As the physical library becomes less available due to limited staffing and open hours, new opportunities are available to use technology resources designed for individual use to mobilize student use of library resources. Equipment such as e-readers and computer tablets are being considered. The goal is to make library reading and research materials available to students everywhere on campus and not only in the physical space provided by the library.

#### **Hardware and Connectivity**

The current quantity and quality of technology hardware is sufficient to meet the needs of current in-house use of the library.

There are three desktop computers designated for staff use: one for circulation, one for the teacher librarian and one for staff only use. These computers share access to a high capacity, high speed Canon color printer. There are two computers assigned to Renaissance Learning's Accelerated Reader (AR) program and three stations for the online public access catalog. A small outdated Epson Stylus printer is available for printing at the circulation desk. There isn't printer access for the OPAC or the AR computers. The computer research lab consists of fifteen stations and a networked printer. The textbook room has two desktop computers, one for circulation and one for the exclusive use of staff. There is another small printer networked to



these. All of these systems were obviously purchased at the approximately the same time since they are all Dell Optiplex 760s with the same memory and storage capacities. All have cd/dvd read/write drives and at least four usb ports. This equipment represents some significant issues for maintenance and repair.

Additionally, there are several pieces of presentation equipment available for use only in the library including a document camera, a one-person microphone and speaker system, an LCD projector and a laptop computer. The library's main reference room is frequently used as a school and community meeting room and this equipment is designated for their use.

There is a copy machine in the library workroom for staff only use. Students take Cornell notes or take photographs using their cell phones of information they need when researching in hardcopy library materials. Last year, students were issued thumb drives for use in storing and transferring data between classes, in the library and at home. It was decided that this was not the most effective way to successfully keep track of student assignments so they were not issued drives this year. After a district wide transfer this year to Google for email, teachers are being encouraged and trained in the use of Google Docs and other Google tools. In some classes, students are also using Google based tools. By next year, all students will be expected to use online storage and networking tools.

All of the computers in the library have access to Pasadena Unified School District's network (PUSD) so servers are not necessary in the library. Although they are not networked to each other for the use of peripherals, they do have access to the internet and district internet-based resources. There is also wireless access available in the library. The wireless modem is located in the main reference room and provides limited but secure access to the PUSD's network. Several of the buildings on have wireless access but the campus lacks a coordinated effort to provide access. It is unclear who manages these issues since on-campus technology problems are handled by several people but it is obvious that an effort has been made in the library to begin the process of creating the needed basic technology framework.

### **Electronic resources and Access Issues**



Every computer in the library has access to the John Muir High School website. From that central location, the entire staff, student body, parents and community members have access to teacher websites, the student management system (Aeries/ABI), online

database subscriptions, other school facilities and libraries, and several other internet-based PUSD networked resources. The library page on the JMHS site, directs users to specific programs and resources available both inside and outside of the library. The Destiny online public access catalog is available on campus to any computer with PUSD network access. There are ongoing discussions about making access available to students from home. Students and faculty have password access to online subscriptions to Britannica and Proquest through SIRS. The Electronic Library and the Academy Integrated Projects pages are wiki-based websites that provide access to additional information and resources for students to teacher assignments and academy projects. The Literacy Skills Learning Commons is wiki that supports students by providing standardized links and instruction in information literacy skills. There are links to electronic versions of textbooks and other resources provided by the textbook publishers and to the campus-wide implementation of Accelerated Reader. The majority of these links are available off campus as well as on campus.

The library's physical collection contains a small collection of CD-ROMs, videos, and audio-books of less than 200 titles. Use of these materials is limited by available equipment and by the restriction that they are only checked out to faculty. These policies need to be reevaluated in light of the limitations currently imposed on them.

The computer research lab workstations have the minimum available required Microsoft software for students to do word processing and create power point presentations. The Special Education and Library staff is in the process of adding several adaptive software programs for use by all of the students but especially for those with special needs. Students are being introduced to online open source and Google technologies for word processing and PowerPoint presentations in anticipation of using them almost exclusively in the near future.

## **Future plans**

PUSD is currently creating and refining the District Technology Plan. Long range goals are not established at the site level and, with the current budgetary situation, it is not a high priority. There are several things that the teacher library will need to address to create a Library specific technology plan. Several purchases need to be made to augment the current hardware and provide better presentation capabilities for teaching in the library. Two additional printers need to be bought. Permanent installation of the LCD projector and/or the



purchase and installation of a SmartBoard would be very valuable. For research and teaching beyond the library, consideration should be given to purchasing e-readers or iPads with wireless connectivity for information literacy lessons and access to Accelerated Reader. These would also be important for use in introducing online storage of information and online presentation products to students. The teacher librarian needs to set up a technology hardware database that includes a comprehensive maintenance schedule for all the library equipment. She can also recommend that a committee be formed to evaluate future goals and purchases. Additional software purchases may be required to supplement to online products available. It's not a good idea to put all of our resources online should internet access be temporarily unavailable for whatever reason. For security reasons, software that monitors student use of the computer research lab is a priority as well. Currently, student usage is unmonitored which has caused some issues with reconfiguring individual workstations and removing or adding software. All of these items are concerns for effectively using technology in the library.

This library needs to become a campus wide resource outside of the library building. Training and research will need to be available in the classroom, at home and in the library. Limited open library hours handicap the teacher librarian's ability to reach the teachers and students inside the facility. Instead, her time needs to be used more effectively reaching her patrons where they are. The opportunity to introduce personal technologies through the library program is a possible solution. Just like the old-fashioned bookmobile that took the library to the patrons, this library needs to evaluate taking the library and its resources to the students and teachers. To do this effectively, the technology within the library and policies for making it available will need to be re-evaluated. Instead of building a collection development policy emphasizing local books and materials, a long-range plan for incrementally increasing the percentage of online materials, databases and tools is more reasonable. With the new tools available, this virtual bookmobile idea can be very successful.